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*Die Ursprüngliche Verbreitung der angebauten Nutzpflanzen.* F. HÖCK. Leipzig, Teubner. 1900. Pp. 78. M. 1.60.

*Lehrbuch der vergleichenden mikroskopischen Anatomie der Wirbeltiere.* ALBERT OPPEL. Jena, Gustav Fischer. 1900. Part III. Pp. x + 1180 and 10 plates.

*A School Chemistry.* JOHN WADDELL. New York and London, The Macmillan Company. 1900. Pp. xiii + 278.

#### SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS AND ARTICLES.

*Popular Astronomy* for October contains an excellent sketch by Professor C. D. Perrine of the late James Edward Keeler, of Lick Observatory, accompanied by his photograph. The opening address by Dr. A. A. Common, F.R.S., F.R.A.S., at the Bradford meeting of the British Astronomical Association for the Advancement of Science is begun in this number and will be concluded in the November number. Also the first part of Kurt Laves' paper on 'The Adjustment of the Equatorial Telescope' is given. Tables for the observation of the planet Eros and an illustrated article upon that planet by the editor, W. W. Payne, together with a résumé of recent work at the Lowell Observatory are important features of this issue, as well as the usual spectroscopic, planet, comet and general notes.

#### SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

##### THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON.

At the meeting of the Society on October 13th, Mr. O. H. Tittmann told in an informal way of some of the incidents of the marking of the provisional boundary between Alaska and the British possessions, at the head of the Lynn Canal, during the past summer.

Dr. Artemus Martin read a paper on 'A Method of Computing the Logarithm of a Number without making use of any Logarithm but that of 10 or some power of 10.' The method in this paper consists in modifying some of the ordinary forms of logarithmic series so that the logarithm used in the computation is the logarithm of 10 or some power of 10.

Dr. T. J. J. See read a paper on the 'System of Uranus.' It combines a statement of some of the recent results of observations, a

comparison of these with former results and a critical statement of the uncertainties involved in the present knowledge of the system.

##### THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE OF ST. LOUIS.

At the first meeting of the autumn, held on the evening of October 15th, there were sixteen persons present. Mr. William H. Roever, of Washington University, presented an elaborate paper, discussing in detail the subject of the establishment of the method of least squares. Professor F. E. Nipher presented two papers, entitled respectively 'Positive Photography,' with special reference to eclipse work and the frictional effects of railway trains upon the air; and Mr. C. F. Baker exhibited an interesting collection representing nearly all of the species of fleas thus far known, which he had prepared for the United States National Museum.

Four persons were elected to active membership.

WILLIAM TRELEASE,  
*Recording Secretary.*

#### DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

##### ARITHMETICAL NOTE.

IN the second edition of the *Exercices d'arithmétique* of MM. Fitzpatrick and Chevrel (Paris, Hermann, 1900), there is given the following interesting application of the binary system of notation (p. 490). Russian peasants, when they have to perform a multiplication, in general proceed thus: They divide the multiplicand by 2, and at the same time double the multiplier; if the multiplicand is odd, they discard the unit remainder and mark the multiplier with a sign. This being done as often as possible, the multipliers affected with the sign are added together to obtain the result. Thus, for example, the multiplication of 35 by 42 proceeds as follows:

35.....	42 +
17.....	84 +
8.....	168
4.....	336
2.....	672
1.....	1344 +
	42 + 84 + 1344 = 1470.

It is easy enough to construct a similar process, *e. g.*, for the ternary system of nota-